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ABSTRACT

There are ten easy steps to managing cooperative occupational education. (1) Establish cooperative occupational education as a major component within the total vocational program. (2) Make a careful assessment of the students' needs and readiness to participate in a cooperative training experience. (3) Select training stations on the basis of criteria of appropriateness for the trainee and reliability of the firm. (4) Select specific job placements within a training station based on the career interests and training needs of the individual student. (5) Select the training sponsors carefully and help them become effective in the roles of counselor, instructor, planner, and evaluator. (6) Develop training agreements which will clearly identify the commitments and responsibilities of all parties. (7) Develop a tailor-made training plan for each individual trainee based upon his/her career objectives. (8) Orient the student-trainees to their training stations. (9) Establish a system and schedule for conducting coordination visits. (10) Establish an evaluation system with criteria that will adequately measure the learning outcomes of the student and the overall effectiveness of the program. (This monograph, part of a series on competency-based education, details ways of effectively implementing these steps. A form for training site evaluations, and an example of a training plan are appended.) (Author/AYC)

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MANAGING A PERFORMANCE ON THE JOB

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This series of monographs includes the following:

1. Using Performance Goals
2. Using Performance Objectives
3. Developing a Performance Syllabus
4. Evaluating Performances
5. Motivating Performance Learning
6. Developing and Using Performance Modules
7. Addressing Affective Performance
8. Remediating and Enriching Performance Learning
9. Managing a Performance On The Job
10. Maximizing Teaching/Learning

This is one of ten monographs in a series relating to IMPLEMENTING COMPETENCY BASED EDUCATION IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES developed at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. This project was developed under a grant to St. Clair County Community College and was funded by the Michigan Department of Education, Higher Education Management Services, Occupational Education Unit. Project #33B9-7447-2.

Managing a Performance on the Job

It is the purpose of this monograph to describe the components of cooperative occupational education programs which need to be managed. The monograph will briefly address: (a) accepting cooperative occupational education, (b) assessing trainees, (c) selecting training stations, (d) placing trainees, (e) developing sponsors, (f) designing training agreements, (g) writing training plans, (h) orienting trainees, (i) coordinating training, and (j) evaluating performance. The aforenoted ten components cover the bases. For the practicing expert, the material should only serve as a review. For the novice, the material should serve as a starter. The true pro in cooperative education must be developed. Further reading, study, practice, and refinement will be essential.

Definitions for each of the specific terms used in this monograph are presented in the text at the point where the term is introduced.

Other monographs in this series which may be of special help to the reader in designing and managing student performance on the job include **Motivating Performance Learning, Evaluating Performance, Managing Performance Remediation,** and **Maximizing Teaching/Learning.**

Accepting Cooperative Occupational Education

Considerable research has been done on the conditions which affect learning and student motivation. Perhaps the most significant principle gleaned from these efforts has been the need for the **active involvement** of the student in the learning process. Cooperative occupational education, as a major component in a community college occupational program, is the most viable opportunity for active student involvement in the learning process.

The principle of effect relates to the satisfaction or annoyance a student receives from participating in a given experience. Careful selection of training stations, job placements, and the appropriate design of a training plan help to assure satisfaction and motivate the student to continue further practice. The effect is positive.

The principle of reinforcement is also an integral part of cooperative occupational education. Basic skills developed in the classroom/laboratory are immediately reinforced at the training sta-

tion through the student's on-the-job training experiences. Such reinforcement contributes to a rapid rate of learning.

Many of your peers have found that one of the keys to increasing the efficiency and relevancy of occupational education is the introduction of cooperative education as a component of training programs. Cooperative Occupational Education is a partnership agreement between an educational institution and a business or agency within the community. Coop is a strategy of instruction which involves and unites the college and employers in a cooperative educational effort. Whereas colleges provide the learning experiences in the classroom or laboratory, the employer provides learning experiences in an actual employment setting. If the college doesn't have the equipment, environment, or expertise to develop a critical job skill, your training partner can usually deliver the resources and supervision.

Cooperative occupational education thus becomes an extension of the classroom. It strengthens and polishes the skills which students developed in the classroom or laboratory. One thing it does **not** do, however: it does not **supplant** your instruction. Your instruction, which is based on the competencies needed to succeed in a given job or job cluster, still remains the foundation of the program. That's a pretty important concept to remember! Why? Because a number of individuals who call themselves cooperative occupational education coordinators delegate almost all of the training responsibility to the employer. When this happens, the teacher or coordinator has negated responsibility for the preparation of students for gainful employment.

Another important concept is that the experience of working is **not** the objective sought in cooperative occupational education. Rather, refinement and further development of job skills is the primary objective. In cooperative occupational education, the students should **not** be viewed as part-time workers but as **full-time student-trainees** for whom the school is responsible.

So, what are the distinguishing characteristics of cooperative occupational education in relation to other types of work experience programs?

1. The classroom/laboratory instruction provides the foundation for the total instructional program.

2. The students are placed in a training station and a specific job or job cluster area within that training station which is directly

related to college instruction and to their career objective. The training is provided either on a part-time or alternating-term basis.

3. The students receive educational credit and pay for their on-the-job training.

4. A qualified member of the college staff provides constant supervision in the employing firm.

5. The college, together with the employer and the student, develops a training plan specifically tailored to that individual student's training needs.

6. The students participate in the program for a length of time sufficient to develop the competencies necessary to obtain and maintain full-time employment in their chosen career field.

Assessing Trainees

One of the major benefits of cooperative occupational education is that it facilitates career development. By working closely with students on an individual basis, the students should be able to refine their career interests.

When students enter your program, they have probably made at least a tentative career choice. Through subsequent learning experiences the career choice should be reaffirmed, revised, or rejected. Periodic exploratory experiences provided in a variety of employment settings will provide opportunity to interact with employees in an acutal work environment. The process usually results in increased student motivation and a greater fascination with the promise of career success.

Intensified counseling and careful assessment of each student's needs, interests, and abilities becomes important. What type of behavior patterns have you observed in the classroom/laboratory? How well does the student react to stressful situations? How well does the student interact with peers? How does the student react to constructive criticism of performance in the classroom/laboratory? What is the student's record of attendance and timeliness? What observations have been made by other teachers? What do the student's achievement test scores and academic records indicate? How responsible is the student? What degree of competency can the student demonstrate in performing basic job tasks?

The answers to these and other similar questions will provide a general profile of the student's readiness for becoming a full-time student-trainee. It is critical that this assessment be made as carefully as possible since premature placement may cause the student to ex-

perience failure on the job, create subsequent problems in the placement of future students, or result in a poor public image. It is axiomatic that a student not be placed in a cooperative training experience until a sufficient degree of maturity, responsibility, and basic employability skills to assure success has been demonstrated.

Selecting Training Stations

A training station is an employing firm, agency, or institution which serves as a partner to provide learning experiences related to the student's career goal. The selection of training stations is not a task to be taken lightly. A poor selection can easily result in employer exploitation of the student, irrelevant learning experiences, decreased motivation on the part of the student, the development of poor work habits, and a negative stereotyped image of the work world.

Criteria for Selection

There are no absolute fail-safe systems or criteria for the selection of training stations. Research efforts and trial-and-error experience by your peers have identified several things to consider.

Although the rank and file employees of a firm may support the training of persons in a cooperative arrangement, the support must be mirrored by top management. Do they sincerely believe that their firm has a social as well as an economic responsibility in the development of qualified personnel? Do they support training programs within their own company for their regular employees? Are they willing to support their line and staff personnel in fulfilling the firm's signed commitment for training?

Qualified supervisors. Are there personnel within the firm who are willing and qualified to provide day-to-day supervision of the student-trainees? Are they willing to work closely with you as the educational supervisor? Will they regard training as part of their job or as an extra responsibility? Will they provide appropriate role models?

Suitable training. Although a firm and its staff may be supportive of cooperative training arrangements, it is imperative that specific job placements within that firm be appropriate to the career interests and training needs of the individual student. Are there placements relevant to the student's initial placement needs? Are placements available over a sustained period of time?

Working conditions. Are adequate up-to-date facilities and

equipment available for training? Are the working conditions safe and free from hazards? Is the pay scale equitable? Is the insurance coverage adequate? Does the firm comply with all local, state, and federal regulations regarding hours, wages, safety, and employment practices? Is the location of the firm easily accessible to the student?

Reputation. Does the firm enjoy a reputation for integrity and progressiveness in the community? Does the firm have a good reputation for ethical business practices?

Procedures for Selection

Now that the criteria for selecting appropriate training stations have been identified, you are probably asking yourself, "But how do I develop and organize a system for obtaining such information?" The specific design of a system is dependent upon you and your management style. Some proven procedures which you may want to consider are provided below.

Conduct placement surveys. After assessing your students' training needs and career interests, identify those forms within the surrounding community which seem to match those needs. Arrange an interview with top management to discuss the program. Through a structured interview, determine their interest and support for the program. Ask to speak with their personnel who might be designated as supervisors of students. Talk with some of the employees of the firm. Observe the working conditions. Complete the survey form included in the appendix or a similar one which you may develop.

Informal observations. As you shop, travel, or visit with businesspeople throughout your community, keep your eyes and ears open for potential training stations. Keep a notebook in your car and make some notes of these observations. If you get a lead from a business acquaintance over dinner, write it down. Follow up the leads.

Join the Chamber of Commerce. What new firms are considering locating in your community? What are their training needs and employment opportunities? What firms are planning major expansion efforts? What firms are members of the Chamber and play a major role in its program of activities?

Consult instructors. What have been the experiences of other instructors who have utilized the cooperative strategy? Which training stations have they found to be the most cooperative and supportive of the program? With which firms have former graduates of your college obtained full time employment?

Consult students. In all probability, there are many students attending your college who have been or are currently employed in various firms throughout the community. What are their experiences? Do they feel their employers are fair? Do they feel they have profited educationally from their experiences?

These are but a few of the sources from which you can obtain pertinent information in selecting training stations for your students. To become adept, you must develop a keen awareness and sensitivity to all possible data sources. Never miss an opportunity to follow up on some bit of information regardless of how insignifcant it may appear. Above all, **be organized.**

Placing Trainees

Regardless of the quality of a potential training station, unless the specific job placement will enable the student-trainees to become proficient in their chosen vocation, it is not an appropriate placement. Consider, for example, the student who is interested in becoming an automobile mechanic. Through careful analysis of potential training stations, you have determined that the Automobile Service Center at Sears would be an excellent training station. You later find, however, that the manager of the Center is able to place the student, not in the service area as requested, but in the Parts Department. Based on the career interest and training neeas of the student, this would be considered an inappropriate job placement. Why? Because the experience of working is not the purpose of on-the-job training. Your objective must always be to place the student trainees in a job whereby they can apply and further refine skills essential for success as a full-time employee in the chosen career field.

Just as an inappropriate selection of a training station can result in negative outcomes, poor job placement can likewise lead to the development of poor work habits, irrelevant training experiences, as well as lack of interest and motivation. Relevant job training, on the other hand, will provide an excellent reference for future full-time employment and the sweet taste of success as the student progresses toward career goal attainment.

Criteria for Selection

Appropriate job placements can be found in various public or private firms, regardless of size. These placements may be made with individual proprietorships, partnerships, or corporations; with chains or franchise operations; or with manufacturers, wholesalers,

retailers, or service institutions. Once you have narrowed down the possibilities to specifically identified potential training stations, your investigation must then proceed to the identification of job placements within those firms. Some of the more pertinent criteria which may be used to assist you in this process include:

Relevancy. The job placement must be relevant and appropriate to the career goal of the individual student-trainee.

Opportunity. Training opportunities must be provided whereby the student-trainee can apply the job skills developed in the classroom/laboratory.

Practice. Training experiences must be provided which will enable the student to strengthen and further enhance those job skills required for successful full-time employment.

Related. The training experiences provided must be practical in nature and highly correlated with the student-trainee's classroom/laboratory instruction.

Potential. The placement should have advancement potential for the individual student-trainee.

Challenge. The placement must be sufficiently important and complex as to require training and justify college credit.

Non-competitive. The placement should not replace full-time regular employees. Although an instructor may often be tempted to play the role of an "order-taker" or placement officer of part-time workers for various firms, the easy way is rarely the most effective practice to follow. Working for experience is not the objective. Relevant training which will enable the student to achieve career objectives must be the pervading standard in the identification of appropriate job placements.

Job Development

Job development is the process of working with management to create or modify a job which will be appropriate to the training needs and career aspirations of an individual student. This is often critical in the development of individual job placements.

Occasionally you may have a student whose unique training needs make it difficult to identify an appropriate job placement. In such situations, you may seek to create a new job within a firm by identifying a series of tasks from several occupations which, when clustered, will create a different type of job. In other instances, it

may be possible to create new jobs through identification of overloads in some other jobs or by identifying meaningful work which often goes undone because it has not been specifically assigned to any given individual or job classification.

Once you have become adept at this process, it is usually wise to continue these efforts on a regular basis in order to provide for the potential placement of future student-trainees. This, in many respects, reflects the epitome of cooperative training arrangements as the management of the training station and the educational personnel are working together in a joint effort to meet the needs of students in the most effective manner possible.

Developing Sponsors

The training sponsor is the individual responsible for supervising the student-trainee on the job. This complex job requires the training sponsor to wear the alternating hats of counselor, instructor, experience planner, and evaluator.

Selection Criteria

You have probably been witness to excellent teachers proving to be ineffective administrators as well as rather weak teachers becoming most capable administrators. A parallel can be found in most businesses. Many individuals, while being very capable, productive employees, do not have the skills to serve effectively as training sponsors. You must look beyond the surface of specific job skills into character, compassion, patience, and commitment for appropriate training sponsors. Some of the criteria which may guide you in this process include:

Interest. The individual must have a sincere interest in working with students. The student will be placed as a bona fide trainee, not as a "gofer." The individual must be willing to go beyond the written agreements or commitments and embrace the **spirit** of the commitment.

Value. The individual should consider the responsibility to be important, not merely an extra duty. This may necessitate additional time, effort, counsel, and attention throughout the training period. Individuals who are prone to say, "I don't have time for you now, kid," or "Figure it out for yourself" are rarely effective as training sponsors.

Availability. The individual must be in close proximity to the

student-trainee's work area. This is especially critical in the initial stages of the training experience. Questions, concerns, and crises may arise quickly which call for immediate action. A training sponsor who is located three floors away would be of little assistance to a student-trainee.

Skill. The individual must have the technical competence required to perform his/her own job proficiently to be effective in teaching these job skills to the student-trainees.

Mentor. The individual must be adept as an evaluator. An evaluator must be able to recognize strengths and weaknesses of the student-trainees, determine when additional training is needed, outline the types of experiences needed to correct deficiencies, and offer constructive criticism which will not offend or lessen the motivation of the student-trainee.

In many instances, top management will retain the prerogative of selecting the individuals who will serve as training sponsors within the firm. If this is the case, you can still work in a cooperative manner with the manager to provide the criteria for the selection process. Regardless of the process or procedures used to identify such individuals, the designation must be mutually acceptable with the pervading standard of "acceptable role model for the student-trainee" uppermost in the mind.

Orientation and Development of Training Sponsors

The orientation and development of training sponsors is a continuous process. If you are working with a number of new training sponsors, it may be more efficient to conduct a group orientation session. After brief introductions, you should explain the critical importance of the training sponsors, for they are the key to effectiveness in this training component of the program.

To fully orient sponsors you need to review the goals and objectives of the program, the major features of the curriculum, and the organization of the program. The roles of all involved should be carefully outlined and defined. Major responsibilities, timelines, and role expectations should be discussed in detail. It may be extremely helpful to duplicate these explanations and provide each training sponsor with a personal copy for future reference.

Although these items may fill the agenda for the initial meeting, subsequent group sessions may be devoted to reporting procedures, evaluation instruments, supervisory techniques, problem solving,

and the identification of training materials available in the participating firms.

In addition to group sessions, you will need to conduct a number of sessions with each training sponsor individually. The major purpose of these sessions will be to identify and provide for the unique needs of student-trainees. These are normally held on the work premises of the cooperating firm for the convenience of the training sponsor.

Your initial meeting with the training sponsor should center around the development of a training agreement and a training plan for the student-trainee. These will be discussed in greater length on the following pages. Subsequent sessions should be devoted to assessing the student-trainee's performance and to addressing any concerns and/or problems which may arise from the training program. For these purposes, it is critical that you be **readily accessible at all times** to the training sponsor.

Designing Training Agreements

A training agreement, although not a legal document, is a quasi-contract signed by the training sponsor, the educational supervisor, and the student, which describes the commitments and responsibilities of each party. Its value rests in the identification of each party's responsibilities in participating in a specific cooperative agreement. In some instances, the training agreement may be used to remind all parties involved of commitments to the program.

The training agreement usually includes the following types of information: (a) name and address of training station, (b) name and position of training sponsor, (c) student-trainee's name and school address, (d) student-trainee's career objectives, (e) identification of the student-trainee's job placement(s) (f) period of training (beginning and ending dates), (g) pay scale, (h) work schedule, (i) student-trainee's responsibilities, (j) educational supervisor's responsibilities, and (k) training sponsor's responsibilities.

The training agreement should be developed and signed by all three parties as soon as possible after management has agreed to hire the student-trainee and after the training sponsor has been identified. Make a copy of the agreement for both the training sponsor and the student-trainee. Place a copy of the agreement in the student trainee's permanent folder in your office for future reference.

Writing Training Plans

A training plan is a written outline of the training experiences to be provided on the job and in the classroom/laboratory. It is by far the most important document to be developed and utilized in MANAGING PERFORMANCE ON THE JOB. It serves as a continuous guide to you, the training sponsor, and the student-trainee. Each party knows exactly what is expected. It provides clear direction and sequence for training experiences and serves as the basis for the formal evaluation of the student-trainee's job performance.

The careful, and sometimes tedious, development of training plans is essential if experiences are to be provided which are relevant to the training needs of the individual student-trainee. To do otherwise is to focus on the experience of **working** as a distinguishing characteristic and purpose.

Parts of the Plan

There is nothing sacred about any style of format to be used in the development of a training plan. It is important that every effort be made to outline a plan which will address the training needs of an individual student-trainee, that expectations are understood by all three parties, that the plan be easy to use, and that the plan be mutually agreeable to all three parties.

The most typical training plans include the following types of information: (a) the name and address of the training station, (b) the name and title of the training sponsor, (c) the name and school address of the student-trainee, (d) the student-trainee's career objective, (e) the student-trainee's job placement(s) (f) the duration of that specific training plan, (g) the specific tasks to be mastered by the student-trainee, (h) the training experiences to be provided on the job to enable the student to master the job tasks, (i) the related instruction to be taught in the classroom/laboratory to enable the student to master the identified job tasks, and (j) the estimated length of time required for the student-trainee to master each of the job tasks.

The identification of the job tasks to be performed by the student-trainee and the related instruction to be taught in the classroom/laboratory should be sequenced according to logic, complexity, frequency of performance, and/or importance of the tasks. A copy of a sample training plan is included in the appendix.

Development of Training Plans

It should be acknowledged from the outset that the training plan is not "cast in concrete" but is subject to periodic modifications dependent upon the student-trainee's needs. In fact, **no attempt** should be made to outline a training plan which will serve for the entire duration of the training program. Rather, attention should be focused on shorter time frames such as a month, six weeks, or, in some instances, a quarter. A general rule of thumb to follow is to develop a training plan equal to a grading period.

The development of an individualized training plan should begin with the identification of the competencies required for successful full-time employment in the student-trainee's chosen career. This may be achieved by conducting a task analysis of a given occupation, if such an analysis has not already been conducted in various research studies. The use of the V-TECS and IDECC materials can be of immeasureable use to you in this regard. Many of the training stations may have conducted their own task analysis and may, therefore, provide an excellent source. Don't forget to also check with the local employment agencies and refer to the **Dictionary of Occupational Titles** for additional information. If task listings are obtained from sources other than the training station, verify your listing with that individual training sponsor.

These job tasks and the competencies needed to perform these tasks become the basis for the development of the training plan. It is not enough, however, that they be listed in some order down one column of a page. This would be analogous to writing performance objectives and failing to outline learning experiences whereby the student can achieve those objectives!

You, together with the training sponsor, must work cooperatively in identifying and designing training experiences which enable the student-trainee to master the performance of a given job task. In some instances, experiences more appropriately provided in the classroom/laboratory will be identified. In other cases, there will be experiences identified which can only be provided in the training station. Still, in other situations, there will be experiences which should be provided in both the classroom/laboratory and in the training station for reinforcement purposes.

In developing a training plan, several safeguards should be kept in mind. First, make the training experiences realistic in terms of actual employment requirements, time restrictions, and available resources.

For example, if a student is in training to become an automobile mechanic, it may be interesting to know how to repair Studebakers and spend a week at the American Motors plant as a participant in one of the company's training sessions, but it is doubtful that such experiences would be of value when compared to actual labor market needs. Focus on the "must know" and "need to know." Then, and only then, if time and resources permit, focus on the "nice-to-know."

Second, don't fall into the easy trap of including only those tasks which emphasize cognitive and psychomotor skills. Of equal importance in almost any career are the attitudes, working relationships, and values of the individual worker. Employment studies have repeatedly shown that the major reason for most dismissals is not the lack of technical competence but the worker's (a) inability to get along with others, (b) lack of responsibility, (c) carelessness, (d) absenteeism, and (e) tardiness.

Third, be flexible and open to the suggestions of others. The training sponsors are an equal partner with you in this endeavor. Utilize the expertise of them and their peers and supervisors to the fullest extent. Don't feel uncomfortable if you "don't know it all." You aren't expected to! That's the major reason for having a training partner.

Well-developed training plans can be the most effective motivational tool you will have in working with the student-trainee. In all probability, it will be the first time in the student-trainees' lives that they have seen a purposeful plan of action and direction for achieving career goals.

Orienting Trainees

Do you remember your first day on your first job? It was probably rather frightening. "What do I do now?" "Where do I start?" "Am I supposed to punch in?" "Oops, I think I just goofed!" "Hope no one was looking!" "Where is the restroom anyway?" These and a hundred other questions probably crossed your mind during the course of that first day. If we believe that we should profit from our mistakes, as well as the mistakes of others, doesn't it seem logical that the student-trainee's orientation could be planned?

Whereas you and the training sponsor should work together to outline the orientation activities, the training sponsor will probably actually conduct these activities. One of the first objectives of the orientation program is to make the student-trainee feel part of the

organization. Introduce the trainee to other employees. Explain the chain-of-command and introduce the student-trainee to those individuals within that chain-of-command.

Take the student-trainee to the personnel office to complete any necessary employment papers. Review the working hours of the company, the student-trainee's work schedule, dress regulations, check-in and check-out procedures, security measures, and the employee benefits for which the student-trainee is entitled. Familiarize the student-trainee with the location of various offices and departments within the company. Show the trainee the locations of the restrooms, eating facilities, and telephones.

Finally, familiarize the student-trainee with the work area, including the location of tools, equipment, supplies, materials, and/or merchandise. Although the student-trainee would already have signed the training plan, review the initial assignments. Not only is it important to review the "what" but the "why" as well. A careful explanation of the "why" lends clarity and purpose to the assignment. Implant the notion, "I will plan for my student-trainee what I wish someone had done for me!"

Coordinating Training

At this point in time, your training stations have been selected; the job placements have been determined; the training sponsors have been designated and oriented to the program and their role; training agreements and training plans have been developed and signed by all three parties; and the student-trainee has been oriented to the work station. Now you can sit back and let nature take its course. Right? Wrong! You've heard the expression that "even the best laid plans go awry" or the more current expression, "whatever can happen will happen"? Well, the same is true in your program.

The continued success of your efforts depends directly on follow-through! Student-trainees are earning college credit for their on-the-job training, and you are being given released time for the supervision and/or coordination of that training. Refer to the training agreements you signed and review the responsibilities you agreed to accept. From that review, it is easy to see that your job is only partially completed. In order to assure that the training needs of the student-trainee are being met on a continuous basis, a number of coordination visits must be made. The types and purposes of coordination visits are many and quite varied, depending upon the unique

needs of both your student-trainee and the training sponsor.

Training Sponsor Visitations

Regardless of whether you have been working with an individual training sponsor for one month or ten years, visitations with the training sponsors are a necessary part of the job. Why? Because they are working with **different** student-trainees each training period and because there are numerous activities which must be conducted on a regular basis. These include:

Determine student-trainee progress. To what extent is the student-trainee mastering the performance of the job tasks outlined in the training plan? What are the strengths and weaknesses? Is the student-trainee mastering job tasks within the estimated time frame established?

Determine adherence to training plan. On occasion you may find training sponsors who are quite critical of the student-trainee's job performance. Upon closer examination, you may find that the training sponsor has assigned the student-trainee responsibilities significantly different from those outlined in the training plan. Such deviations may create a breakdown in communications, poor relationships between the student-trainee and the training sponsor, and ineffective job performance on the part of the student-trainee.

On other occasions, you may find that the experiences outlined in the training plan are unrealistic or that circumstances have changed which preclude the implementation of various experiences as planned. Too, you may find that the student-trainee is capable of progressing more rapidly that what had been anticipated. All of these situations require your attention.

Modify training plans. Based on your analysis, together with the training sponsor and the student-trainee, alterations of the training plan may be required. This may involve modifications in the estimated time-frames, a redesigning of training experiences to be provided in the training stations and/or the classroom/laboratory, or changes in the outlined sequence of experiences to be provided.

Update the training plan. You will recall it was strongly suggested that no effort be made to develop a training plan which would encompass the entire training period. If this suggestion was followed, you will need to update and extend the training plan for each student-trainee on several occasions throughout the training period. If a considerable number of modifications were required in the original plan, perhaps you should **shorten** the period of time which the extended

plan would cover. If, on the other hand, only a few modifications were made in the original plan, you may be able to extend the time frame to be covered in the updated plan.

Determine training effectiveness. This is usually readily demonstrated in the ability of the student-trainee to perform given job tasks with an acceptable degree of proficiency. If the student-trainee is unable to meet the required proficiency level within a reasonable period of time, then you and the training sponsor need to exmaine the relevancy and quality of the training experiences provided.

This is analogous to the implementation of a competency-based instructional program in your classroom/laboratory. You clearly define performance objectives, design learning activities whereby the student can meet those objectives, and develop criterion-referenced evaluation measures directly related to the objectives which will assess the degree to which the student has met the objectives. If the objectives are not met, you then redesign your learning activities for that student. These same procedures need to be followed in managing on the job performance.

Prevent exploitation. In rare instances, you may find that a training sponsor has extended a student-trainee's work schedule, failed to provide the wage established in the training agreement, or has assigned the student-trainee a number of menial tasks over and above those specified in his/her training plan. This must be stopped!

Review the training agreement and training plan with the training sponsor. Point out the problems that are being encountered and what the results may cause.

In such discussions, do **not** exhibit a hostile attitude. Seek a reasonable explanation. The actions may be the result of a lack of understanding. In every instance, demonstrate a spirit of cooperation, while remembering the student-trainee's welfare must come first. If all possible attempts at reconciliation are thwarted, you have no alternative but to remove the student-trainee from that job placement. Provided there is prior commitment from top management, the student-trainee may be reassigned to another training sponsor within that firm.

Conduct a formal evaluation. Although informal evaluations are made on a continuous basis throughout the training period, you and the training sponsor must conduct a formal evaluation of the

student-trainee's job performance. This activity will be discussed in greater depth in a subsequent section.

Visitations With Student-Trainees

The title, student-trainee, is significant. It conveys the message that the individual is a learner who is in training for a specific reason. A learner needs continuous guidance, counseling, support, and direction. This cannot be provided exclusively in the classroom/laboratory, but it must be extended to the training station as well. Here are some helpful hints.

Observe the student trainee. How well does he/she perform on the job? What are his/her work habits? Appearance? Outward attitude? Relationships with other employees, supervisors, customers, clients, or patients? Does he/she appear to lack self-confidence?

Identify apparent weaknesses and problems. You've heard the expression, "he's too close to the forest to see the trees"? The same thing may be taking place with the training sponsor. By working with the student-trainee on a daily basis, the training sponsor may not be able to see problems. By the same token, you may give the student trainee more credit for performance of given tasks than the training sponsor. Observations from two parties usually provide a more comprehensive, yet equalized, assessment.

Provide support. Periodic visits just to say, "Hello," "How are you getting along?" "Looks as though you are doing a good job today," says to the student-trainee that you CARE. Being readily accessible for discussions of concerns is also important. Knowing that your moral support and encouragement are available contributes greatly to motivation.

Promotional Visitations

Once you have implemented a cooperative occupational education component in your program, you must work continuously to promote your program, not only within the college but within the community. Some of the purposes for conducting promotional visitations include:

Keep abreast of trends. Being out in the community on a regular basis, talking with employers and employees in your field, observing advances in technology, and attending various types of technical meetings, conferences, and workshops will provide self development. It is perhaps the most workable occupational update program

available.

Identify the potential. As mentioned previously, always keep your eyes and ears open for additional training partners. Being out in the community for promotional visitations will provide many leads.

Obtain training materials. Many businesses, agencies, and institutions belong to associations within their respective field; and, through these memberships, they obtain a wide variety of materials which would be pertinent for use in your instructional program. The vast majority of these firms are happy to share.

Promote program. If there is a firm in your community which you feel has the potential of becoming an effective training station, call on the top management and explain the purposes of the program. Seek their support. Promotional visitations are especially critical with firms that have just moved into your community. Never miss an opportunity to be a salesperson for your program!

Evaluating Performance

Evaluation must be a continuous process encompassing two major components: (a) the periodic formal evaluation of an individual student-trainee's job performance, and (b) the evaluation of the cooperative occupation education component in your total program. Evaluation is a management function which must be conducted as an integral part of everything done on a regular basis. Too many people feel it is sufficient to conduct a comprehensive evaluation study of their program once every five years. In the intervening period, however, little attention is given to evaluation. Consequently, program managers may continue to use ineffective practices, and the student-trainee too often becomes the victim!

Evaluation of Student-Trainee's Job Performance

Although the evaluation of a student-trainee's job performance may be important in the determination of grades, it is critical that such evaluation be viewed primarily as a diagnostic tool in assessing areas of need and achievement.

You will recall that there are numerous purposes for coordination visitations, one of which is to determine the progress of the student-trainee on the job. These periodic informal assessments enable you to diagnose immediate needs of the student-trainees and to make modifications of the training plan where such changes are appropriate. A formal evaluation, on the other hand, seeks to assess the student-trainee's overall achievement in meeting the prescribed re-

quirements as identified within the training plan for a given period of time.

If the guidelines for selection of training stations and training sponsors, placement of student-trainees in specific jobs or job clusters, and the development of training plans have been followed, then you should have little difficulty in developing an instrument for evaluating a student-trainee's job performance. Why? Because the evaluation instrument should be based specifically on the requirements outlined in the training plan as signed by the student-trainee, the training sponsor, and you.

With the major basis of your evaluation having been predetermined, your primary task is that of identifying the type of response data. Do you want a numerical response? A descriptive response? From whom do you want responses? If a number of evaluators are used, should each evaluator use the same form? If you conduct a formal evaluation of each student-trainee periodically, should the same evaluators be used?

You may wish to seek advice and counsel on these questions from various sources: your advisory committee, a special evaluation committee, the training sponsor, the student-trainee, your peers and college administration, or a combination of these sources. A sample evaluation form is included in the appendix. Once you have reviewed the form, modify it to meet your specific needs.

Evaluation of Cooperative Occupational Education Component

The key to increasing the efficiency and relevancy of instruction in your program is to introduce cooperative occupational education as a strategy within the total program. Such an addition could lead to higher placement of your graduates into full-time employment. Cooperative occupational education would also develop job skills which could not otherwise be developed within a classroom or laboratory setting, would enable you to keep abreast of trends and technological changes, and would provide a wealth of assistance to you in curriculum design. A formal evaluation of this strategy as a part of your total program will enable you to determine if such claims are true.

To conduct a comprehensive evaluation, it is essential that you establish evaluation criteria which are congruent with the objectives and purposes of the program. Once the data have been collected, you then have an objective basis for determining whether or not the cooperative occupational strategy improved the efficiency and

relevancy of the program.

Students to be served. According to the purposes of the program, what students were to be served? The "regular college Joe's"? The disadvantaged? The handicapped? The gifted? Were all identified groups served? Could the needs of all groups be better met? Were the training sponsors helpful in more effectively meeting the needs of special groups?

Student placement and follow-up. Has the dropout rate decreased? Has the placement rate of students moving into full-time employment upon completion of your program increased? Are more students employed in jobs for which they have been trained? Have the problems encountered by the graduates in obtaining full-time employment lessened significantly? Are graduates being paid more than employees in similar jobs but with less training? What is the turnover rate of graduates three years after entering full-time employment as compared to other employees? What is the rate of advancement of graduates in comparison with other employees?

Employer satisfaction. What are employers' perceptions of your graduates? Do they feel these graduates are more productive than other employees who have not completed comparable training programs? Are they cooperative? Supportive? Do they call more frequently to obtain the names of graduates for job openings? Have they offered their services in participating as training sponsors for the program? Are they willing to share the resources of their companies, agencies, or institutions? Do they speak favorably of the program to other business persons?

Student satisfaction. Are the students highly motivated? Have they developed a positive self-concept? Are they satisfied in their employment? With their educational and career decisions? Do they publicize the benefits of the program to other students? Has the rate of tardiness and absenteeism been reduced? Has their participation in classroom/laboratory experiences improved? Have they shown an improvement in their other courses? Once they become full-time employees or entrepreneurs, do they volunteer to serve as training sponsors?

Your assessment. Have you made curriculum revisions? Do you feel that the rationale for such revisions was more objective than what you might have made, had you alone decided? Do you feel more comfortable in your instructional program? Are you staying

more abreast of trends and technological changes in your field? Is your curriculum more relevant? Are you satisfied that the objectives, learning activities, and criterion-reference evaluation measures you use in your program are more pertinent to actual employment needs?

The evaluation process is critical if it is to serve as a guide for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. The major goal is to improve instruction whereby the career development and work adjustment of students becomes a systematic and effective product.

Annotated Outreach

Meyer, Warren G., Lucy Crawford, and Mary K. Klaurens. **Coordination in Cooperative Vocational Education.** Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1975.

The intent of this publication is "to help readers develop insight into the relatively wide variety of purposes and goals of cooperative vocational education." The improvement of instruction through examination and use of appropriate coordination techniques is stressed throughout the text, with the focus being the behavior of the student as a learner and future full-time employee. Major attention is given to the development of effective cooperative vocational education programs through the utilization of a variety of coordination techniques seleced on the basis of the specific objective to be achieved.

The major contents of the publication include: Purposes of Cooperative Vocational Education, Roles of a Teacher-Coordinator, Tasks of a Teacher-Coordinator, Facilitating Career Development, Teaching Work Adjustment Competencies, Recruiting and Guiding Student-Trainees, Placing Student-Trainees, Developing the Occupation Experience Laboratory, Organizing and Articulating Instruction, Following Up Student-Trainees at Work, and Evaluating the Program.

The primary intended audience is the educational supervisor or teacher-coordinator responsible for organizing and implementing a cooperative vocational education program, although considerable benefit may also be derived by college administrators, including deans and directors of occupational education program.

A numerous array of suggested techniques is presented, including examples of various types of training plans, evaluation forms, task analysis procedures, and other helpful aids. The specific objectives of each chapter are carefully outlined with the subsequent material organized in an appropriate manner whereby the reader can achieve

the objectives. Concluding statements are offered at the end of each chapter, followed by numerous references for supplementary reading as well as suggested activities for further enhancing understandings.

Mason, Ralph E. and Peter G. Haines. **Cooperative Occupational Education and Work Experience in the Curriculum**. Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers & Publishers, Inc., 1976.

This is the second edition of this popular publication. The first was released in 1965 following the passage of the Vocational Education Act in 1963. It has served as a major handbook for curriculum directors, local administrators, and directors of vocational education as well as for teacher-coordinators themselves.

The approach is direct, with emphasis on the operational techniques and procedures to be followed in organizing and operating a cooperative occupational education program of instruction. This revised edition also emphasizes "the conceptual base behind educational decision-making in order that the use of the work environment be seen clearly not as a program in itself but as a methodology of accomplishing the goals of a curriculum."

The text is organized into five sections including:

The Strategy of Aims and Goal Inputs: includes such topics as the range of instructional programs using the work environment, the development of the individual, the development of manpower resources, and public policy and institutional roles.

The Structure of the Curriculum Patterns: How the Work Environment Is Used at Various Levels--includes work experience plans for secondary and higher education, cooperative occupational plans in the secondary and post-secondary curriculum, coordinators and their roles, initiating the program.

The System of Instruction and Coordination--Planning and Carrying Out Effective In-School Instruction, Developing the Training Station as an Instructional Laboratory, Correlating Instruction Between School and Job Laboratories, The Maturing of the Cooperative Program, Making the Youth Organization an Integral Part of the Instruction.

Applying the Cooperative Plan to Specialized Occupational Programs--Relating to Adult and Continuing Education, Evaluating the Plan to Maintain Quality Control.

The Cooperative Plan in Action--The Program in Industrial Occupations, in Business and Office Occupations, in Distributive and Marketing Occupations, in Diversified Occupational Areas,

and Other Fields.

Questions and Suggested learning activities are included at the end of each chapter. Sample work forms are included along with a most extensive bibliography.

Sign Off

Let's briefly review ten easy steps to Managing Performance on the job.

1. Establish cooperative occupational education as a major component within the total program. In doing so, however, keep in mind the distinguishing characteristics of such a component and do it right! If it's worth doing at all, it's worth doing well!
2. Make a careful assessment of the students' needs and readiness to participate in a cooperative training experience. Don't create unnecessary problems, frustrations, or failure because of premature placement!
3. Select the training station on the basis of criteria. Make sure it is appropriate for that individual student-trainee and that the firm will carry through with its part of the bargain.
4. Select specific job placements within a training station based on the career interests and training needs of the individual student-trainee. Strive for a perfect match, not near-misses!
5. Select the training sponsors with the same care as selecting a colleague. Orient and develop the training sponsors to become effective in the roles of counselor, instructor, planner of experiences, and evaluator.
6. Develop training agreements which will clearly identify the commitments and responsibilities of all parties engaged in the training process. Never take verbal agreements for granted. Avoid possible misunderstandings by putting these agreements in writing.
7. Develop a tailor-made training plan for each individual student-trainee which will enable the student-trainees to reach their career objectives. You will have to manage the student-trainee's performance on the job, so spend the necessary time and effort it will take to make it as relevant as possible.
8. Orient the student-trainees to their training stations. Don't let the student grope. Remember the first day on your first job, and strive to make your student-trainee's experiences a more positive one!
9. Establish a system and a schedule for conducting a variety of coordination visits with the training sponsors, with the student-

trainees, and for promotional purposes. Identify a specific purpose for each visitation and plan the visit to achieve that purpose.

10. Establish an evaluation system, including an identification of evaluative criteria which will adequately assess the learning outcomes of each student-trainee, as well as the effectiveness of the cooperative occupational experience as a strategy of your total program. Conduct your evaluation on a continuous basis and seek input from a wide variety of sources.

Appendix

Example

Evaluation of Training Station

Name of Firm _____ Date Visited _____

Address _____ Owner/Manager's Name _____

Contact Person _____ Title _____ Dept. _____

Type of Business _____ No. of Workers _____

Possible Job Placements: _____

Rating Factor	Good	Average	Fair	Reason
Interest of management in training				
Availability & support of qualified supervisors				
Suitable job placements				
Working conditions				
Reputation of firm				
Full-time employment opportunities				
Overall Evaluation				

Other Comments:

Potential Training Sponsors: _____ Title _____

_____ Title _____

_____

Evaluator

Example

Training Plan

Student-Trainee _____ Address _____

Training Station _____ Address _____

Training Sponsor _____ Training Period _____

Job Placement _____ Community College _____ Address _____

Job Tasks	OJT Experiences	Classroom Experiences	Estimated Time
Transfer merchandise from loading dock to store room.	Assigned to loading dock for unloading incoming shipments and transfer to store room.	Importance of following proper procedures; relationship of stock shortages/damage to profit.	One week
Open cartons as specified on labels. Unwrap packaged merchandise. Check merchandise for damage.	Assigned to open and unwrap merchandise in a variety of cartons.	Simulated activities on proper techniques to follow in unwrapping fragile, non-fragile, bulky assorted mdse.	Two weeks

Check shipment for overage/underage.	Assigned to inspect merchandise for damage and for proper count.		Two weeks
Complete damage reports as needed.	Assigned a variety of report forms to complete based on results of inspection.	Given a variety of receiving forms to simulate completion of incoming shipments.	
Complete overage/ungerage reports as needed.	To be reviewed by supervisor and forwarded to to central office.	Math extensions. Emphasis on accuracy.	
Sign receiving slip, making appropriate notations and forward to central office.	Assigned to mark and price merchandise using cost/price codes, price tags, labels, price staplers, and hand stampers.	Given variety of pricing tags, labels, and price affixing equipment to simulate tagging processes.	Two weeks
Mark/price merchandise as specified by management.	Assigned to transfer stock to sales floor, undercounter, or back stockroom as directed by supervisor.	Given cost codes to follow in affixing retail price.	One week
Move stock to appropriate storage areas.		Purposes of locating stock at various sites. Importance of neatness in stock arrangements.	

Example

OJT Evaluation

Student Trainee _____ Address _____

Training Station _____ Address _____

Training Sponsor _____ For Period of OJT Ending _____

Job Placement _____ College _____

Task	Proficiency of Performance			
Transfers merchandise from loading dock to store room.	1 Needs constant supervision; lets shipments accumulate.	2 Moves stock with little supervision; handles carelessly.	3 Meets minimun requirements; needs further improvement to be proficient.	4 No further training needed.
Opens cartons as specified on labels.	1 Rarely reads directions; considerable damage to mdse.	2 Is somewhat careless; occasional damage to mdse.	3 Meets minimun requirements; needs further improvement to be proficient.	4 No further training needed.

	1	2	3	4
Unwraps packaged merchandise.	Is careless; regularly damages mdse.	Is somewhat careless; occasional damage to mdse.	Meets minimum requirements; needs further improvement to be proficient.	No further training needed.
Checks merchandise for damage, overage, underage.	1 Makes spot checks only; makes numerous oversights.	2 Detects damages; has problems in determining accurate counts.	3 Detects damages, overages, and underages but is slow.	4 No further training needed.
Completes receiving reports as required.	1 Requires constant supervision. Makes numerous errors.	2 Reports are usually accurate but are often illegible.	3 Meets minimum requirements; needs further improvement to be proficient.	4 No further training needed.
Signs receiving slips, makes appropriate notations, and forwards to central office.	1 Requires constant supervision. Makes numerous errors.	2 Usually follows established procedures; occasional errors.	3 Meets minimun requirements; needs further improvement to be proficient.	4 No further training needed.

	1	2	3	4
Marks/prices merchandise as specified by management.	No dexterity in using pricing equipment; extreme difficulty in interpreting codes.	Slow but usually accurate. Needs periodic supervision.	Meets minimum requirements; needs further improvement to be proficient.	No further training needed.
Moves stock to appropriate storage areas.	1 Cannot differentiate among stock locations. Needs constant supervision.	2 Must be told when to move stock to specific locations.	3 Meets minimum requirements; needs further improvement to be proficient.	4 No further training needed.
Works cooperatively with fellow employees.	1 Constant problems.	2 Occasional problems.	3 No improvement needed.	
Works cooperatively with supervisor(s).	1 Constantly complaining, arguing, offering excuses.	2 Usually does work without argument; takes constructive criticism.	3 No improvement needed.	

	1	2	3
Work habits	Constantly tardy; frequently absent; is careless.	Occasionally tardy and/or absent. Tries to perform work carefully.	Meets all expectations of a regular full-time employee.
Dress/appearance	Inappropriately dressed most of the time; careless in appearance; poor health/care habits.	Usually neat in appearance; dressed appropriately for job most of time.	Meets all expectations of a regular full-time employee.

Other Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

(Evaluator) (Date)

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